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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/815,282

04/01/2004

Tilak M. Shah

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8353

23448

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07/02/2007

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY / TECHNOLOGY LAW

PO BOX 14329

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC 27709

EXAMINER

TRAN, THAO T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1711

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

07/02/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/815,282

Applicant(s)

SHAH, TILAK M.

Examiner

Thao T. Tran

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 May 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 74-108 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 74-108 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on May 17, 2007 has been entered.
2. Claims 74-108 are currently pending in this application. Independent claims 74 and 95 have been amended.
3. In view of the prior Office action, the 102(e) rejection of the claims has been withdrawn. A new 103(a) rejection of the claims is set forth below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.
5. Claims 74-108 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Connors et al. (US Pat. 6,976,950).

Connors discloses an attenuation device. In one embodiment, the attenuation device comprises an inflatable container 68 having a generally circular profile (see Fig. 5), and a spherical configuration. The diameter of the inflatable container is 0.25-6 inches, or 1-3 inches,

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significantly overlapping the instantly claimed range (see col. 11, ln. 6-17). The inflatable container comprises a flexible wall 70 having first and second components 74, 76, bonding together by seam 78 (see col. 11, ln. 27-40). In this embodiment, Connors teaches the wall of the balloon to have multiple sheets of polyurethane (see paragraph bridging col. 12-13). However, the reference does not teach the wall of the balloon to have the presently claimed layers.

In another embodiment (see Fig. 16), Connors teaches the wall of the device comprising at least one gas barrier layer and at least one moisture barrier layer. The gas barrier layer comprises polyvinylidene chloride or ethyl vinyl alcohol. The moisture barrier layer comprises polyurethane (see col. 23, ln. 1-20). The overall thickness of the wall is no more than 0.003 inches (3.0 mil). The polyurethane layer is about 0.0025-0.025 inches (0.0635-0.635 mm), and the polyvinylidene chloride layer is about 5-20 microns thick (see col. 23, ln. 44-54), significantly overlapping the presently claimed ranges. A tie layer is also disposed between the gas barrier layer and the moisture barrier layer (see col. 23, ln. 54-61).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have employed the multilayers in the embodiment of Fig. 16 in the balloon of Fig. 5, for the purpose of enhancing flexibility, moisture barrier, gas barrier, and high impact strength.

The interior cavity 72 of the inflatable container contains a compressible media, such as gas (see col. 11, ln. 41-44). The compressible media include compositions that generate gas in the presence of water. One example would be sodium carbonate generating carbon dioxide (see col. 32, ln. 28-43).

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Response to Arguments


6. Applicant's arguments with respect to the 102 rejection of the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Contact Information

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thao T. Tran whose telephone number is 571-272-1080. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, from 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Seidleck can be reached on 571-272-1078. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Thao T. Tran
Primary Examiner
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